Chronices Don Q.

The Ears of the Governor

By K. and Hasketh Pritchard

"The ruffian was afraid to do other

the fact openly. He appears to resen

this, and swore to be revenged on me by depriving me of both of mine."

would be a sufficient humiliation;

"Horrible!" Del Pino caressed his

I myself am about to lead an expedition

into the sierra with that object.'

senor?" asked Don Hugo, with heat.

"It is now hardly

of his gentle politeness.

pointed to the prison at Castelleno.

ine Condessa shovered and obeyed."

"He wagered that alone, unbacked by your comrades—I mean followers, you with exceeding relish. It flattered his self-esteem. The speech was fully reported in the local journal, which we may call El Mundo, but the sting lay waiting in the last clause: "And yet this reputed king of the mountains," concluded Don Hugo, "is, after all, a miserable wretch, poorer than the meannest ass in Spain. In the condessa in Spain, for the speech was conducted but one carries of his carries, and full minuted and obeyed."

"He wagered that alone, unbacked by your comrades—I mean followers, you would prove yourself—oh, how can I wist in the tast cannot forgive his treatment of my breaking down the restraint Don Hugo had been of derision or incredulity, deepened the corners of his mouth. "Of personal ill-treatment? Surely the replied with an air of loftiness."

"Have it then," she cried desperate by the carries with a view to setting an end to his carreer. A conclave of the private but one carries but one carries but one carries and surface and obeyed."

"He wagered that alone, unbacked by your comrades—I mean followers, you comrades—I mean followers, you comrades—I mean followers, you had placed upon his temper.

"Not precisely. But I admit that sight of the siera reminded me of your foolish visit up there, and naturally of the siera reminded me of your foolish visit up there, and naturally of the siera reminded me of your foolish visit up there, and naturally of the siera reminded me of your foolish visit up there, and naturally of the siera reminded me of your foolish visit up there, and naturally of the siera reminded me of your foolish visit up there, and naturally of the siera reminded me of

carries but one ear!"
Whatever his other bodily infirmities, the bandit possessed both his ears, yet the libel was of a nature which could never be forgiven. His diseased vanity dwelt upon it with an evergrowing bitterness. The slumbering devil in him awoke, tormenting him to

Upon this day, which followed an in- Don Hugo, your husband." terval of terrified quietness, the robbers' valley was thrilled by an excitement, hot with the double seasoning of "But," she ventured, "you promised to help me."

"That will I do also." ment, hot with the double seasoning of novelty and danger. A party scouring the lower hills, according to their practice, had met with a lady—a very great lady she seemed—who far from chiest.

"Tell him I have a little museum up here in the mountains, to which I desire a small addition." lady she seemed-who far from object-

'Lord, a senora would speak with ou," stuttered the man.

Don Q. paused. It must be confessed hat a lady desiring an interview with "Nay, senora, he will be the more you," stuttered the man. that a lady desiring an interview with him was something of a novelty. "Good. The senora's name?"

'The lady would tell you that her-

with relief, but the chief stopped him. Stay, Gaspar. Make up the fire and light a torch, fix it up there behind me. I trust, Gaspar, you have not

Don Q. rose from his seat in the 'I am the chief of the sequestradores,

Senora," began the soft voice after ishness.

when you could."

pleasure at the sight of so much beauty take or slip could only end in supreme is only equalled by my impatience to know in what manner I can show my Don Q. gratitude for the honor of this visit." somest caballero in Spain, alas!'

"Ah! And the countess dwells—"
"In Castelleno," she answered.
"In Castelleno?" The fact was perti"In castelleno?" The fact was perti"In the moment. "Be seated, se"In the moment. "Be seated, se"In the moment." The fact was perti"In the moment." The fact was per nent to the moment. "Be seated, sewith the governor of the prison!

countess started slightly. 'Is he not an ugly, pimple-faced fel-

he is an exceedingly handsome man."
He cut her short. "Pardon me, but are you sure? I have heard that la-

Ken., Ho, to, tek, ken. The men eyes.
"Hardly possible, Don Q. He is my eyes.
"That is well. Keep your oath in advised Don Q., "for the story husband!

swered, and sighed impatiently.

ernor Don Hugo?" The chief's smooth mind," advised Don Q., wolce vibrated slightly with some emo-"Of what use is beauty if it does your children's children." not secure love?" she cried petulantly. After this the quiet

'You love him?'

'At this moment I hate him!" She trance to the valley leant forward with a swing of her lithe body, her, eyes flashing. "I heard a an entrance known to none but him-

"Everything, if you will help me! Yes, we quarrelled. He laughed at my tears. I vowed I would throw myself on your protection. He dared me to do so, and, protection. He dared me to do so, and, protection. The dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection. The dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection. The dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection. The dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection. The dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection of the dared me to do so, and, protection always before his eyes took the deal specially with a man of such interesting antecedents."

"Can you bring yourself to conceive the fellow has committed." though I was indeed afraid (for your name is a cause for shuddering in the plains, senor, I came. He must pay a He was engaged upon a fantastic

to value his wife. "Nay, senora. I could not have the heart to deprive him of your charming society. Figure to yourself his anxiety!" was the unexpected reply. "You shall be sent down to Castelleno tomor-

not go!" she cried imperiously. "I did a couple of reclining chairs had been not fancy you would side against me placed in the best position to catch the with my husband. Remember," with a cool airs from the mountains,

A new governor had lately been ap- | when he says that." A changed note in his feet. He glanced angrily at his cellency. I cannot imagine the the low voice frightened her.
"He had an argument to back it,"

"No, no," she sobbed. "I recollect no more.' "Then listen. The governor of the prison of Castellano was good enough

to declare in public that I have but one ear. It is a lie, as I mean to show him. Tomorrow you will take a message from me to His Excellency

"Tell him further that when I come and she seemed—who far from objecting after the usual manner to being down from Castelleno I shall have with me two ears—my own; but then when stantly demanded to be taken into the research of the dreaded chief.

I depart I shall have four ears, my presence of the dreaded chief. own and his. Yes, senora; alone and In the dusk Don Q lifted up his head. single-handed, within fifteen days, I, "Do not keep peace any longer, I pray.
Gaspar," he said in a sharp, sibilant voice. "What is it?"

Don Q., will come down from the mcuntains and crop the ears of the governor of the prison of Castelleno." "But," she cried in horror, have deceived me.

faithful, believe me.'

For the eighth time the governor of the prison of Castelleno muttered an angry oath. Because, for the eighth time that evening, his excellency had ceived, and date of release; the second found his hand straying nervously to his ears.

The message of Don Q. had been

me. I trust, Gaspar, you have the senora by keeping inconvenienced the senora by keeping her waiting? I will ask her, and if—" the silence was eloquent.

The message of Don Q. had been faithfully brought down to him by his wife. In her presence, and, indeed, to himself during the hours of daylight, and faithfully brought down to him by his wife. In her presence, and, indeed, to himself during the hours of daylight, and the them. he would scoff at the threat as the abthe circle of light within the cave. Her face was hidden by a mantilla, but she moved with the air of acknowled with the a

At the same instant she flung back made him shudder. For Don Q. was a turbed the meeting. her mantilla and dislosed her features. man of a strange, warped sense of hu-Don Q. gazed at her for a moment in mor, and scarcely one of the legends blossom, her somewhat cruel-looking but extreme beauty enhanced by a skin blossom. None ever lived to carry captured to speak with a mouth like a red blossom, her somewhat cruel-looking but extreme beauty enhanced by a skin blossom. None ever lived to carry captured to speak with out delay to the governor on a matter out delay to the ighest importance. "You will be good enough to request captured to speak with out delay to the governor on a matter of the ighest importance. "You will be good enough to request captured to speak with out delay to the governor on a matter of the ighest importance. of exquisite fairness, and crowned with him false news twice. But true information was paid for with terrific lav- tiently

"Catalina, the Condessa—" She broke with his threats. Up in the Boca de tered an exclamation. and wished to gain it without delay. bers' valley was called, all was going Madrid upon business connected with "I was told that you were kind to those on as usual. Don Q. remained in his Don Q. in distress, and would help a woman cave issuing orders and dealing out justice according to his own drastic "I rejoice that there are still some code. But he was not idle. The task speakers of the truth under the mountains. Be at ease, Dona Castellina, my mous magnitude, and any small mis-

Don Q.'s plan was laid out very sub-tly, and with a minute precision of Senor, I am the wife of the hand- detail, for his fierce heart dwelt in a

tains with whom it is necessary that I should deal, the governor of the prison of Castelleno.

A flicker of excitement lit up the ow?" questioned Don Q.

She replied hotly: "On the contrary, raised his delicate yellow hand.

cried out at the mere sight of his by day. I lay no command of silence You will bring my food as usual day 'With gratification, perhaps," she an-No, no, senora; you are surely mis-

After this the quiet of death fell upon the cave. The band believed the chief to be still there, for he certainly "Not always," with a charming pout. had not passed by the sentries, who rigorously kept the only known en-

whisper—I suspected—I set sples—I followed him. She clasped her hands being for him, tied amongst some high with a vehement gesture of rage. "O, at horse saddled and bridled in twenty years already, and that a score or so expeditions sent out against him at this moment I could kill him!" days, whether riding downwards by "Proceed, I beg of you. What have I devious and little known paths, or shrug of his shoulders. "He must be a shrug of his shoulders."

ansom for me. Thus shall he be taught exploit. The difficulty of entering the governor's presence might in

. . . It was evening. On the roof of the The beautiful face darkened. "I will prison beside a cluster of potted palms

witching glance at the dim figure in the corner, "you promised to help me."

"I have not forgetten. Yet you must governor sat smoking cigarettes in the go tomorrow, though your departure moody silence that day by day was will leave the mountains bleak indeed."
"You are only a man after ali!" she exclaimed angrily. "The sins of one white town and the tillage surrounding The Condessa shivered and obeyed it. to the tracery of peaks and pinnacle man; perhaps you would feel less for which beyond them elimbed into the says of you. Only last Sunday he vowed you were a coward."

"Don Hugo takes much upon himself A sweet low laugh brought him to "You must forgive my man and the tillage surrounding it. to the tracery of peaks and pinnacle tion to obvious. I wonder that the property of the peak to the peak and pinnacle the peak and p

wife.

Don Hugo was a roystering blade, handsome, noted for his gallantries, and early successful in his career. In an ill-advised hour he delivered a speech in public, wherein he observed wise. The low voice frightened her.

"He had an argument to back it," she ran on nervously. "He said that it was easy to terrify a helpless captive up here when you have your men beatiff you. But he would wager—O. I cannot go on, senor!"

"He had an argument to back it," she rain on nervously. "He said that it was easy to terrify a helpless captive up here when you have your men beatiff you. But he would wager—O. I cannot forgive his treatment of my speech in public, wherein he observed "Favor me by proceeding senora."

"He had an argument to back it," she ruman was alraid to do other—Condessa's identity, he permitted her to the mountains and finger your ears as if Don Q. could stretch his long talons across from his cave and pull them off!" she laughed again with an abandon of enjoyment that came near to wife; he terrified her with shocking the low voice frightened her.

"Again! O, my Hugo, you stare at the mountains and finger your ears as if Don Q. could stretch his long talons across from his cave and pull them off!" she laughed again with an abandon of enjoyment that came near to wife; he terrified her with shocking the low voice frightened her.

"Again! O, my Hugo, you stare at the mountains and finger your ears as if Don Q. could stretch his long talons across from his cave and pull them off!" she laughed again with an abandon of enjoyment that came near to wife; he terrified her with shocking the low voice frightened her.

"Again! O, my Hugo, you stare at the mountains and finger your ears as if Don Q. could stretch his long talons are constant." In the ruman was alraid to do other—than the delivers are the said that it was easy to terrify a helpless captive and the said that it was easy to terrify a helpless captive and the said that it was easy to terrify a helpless captive and the said that it was easy to terrify a helple

The senora rose from her seat and curtseyed deeply and deristvely. "I shall be doubly anxious about your ears then, my beloved! Don Q. is a man of his word. But, see, your guests own ears meditatively.

begin to arrive." Spaniards, in spite of their reserve, are moved to excitement upon any subject which touches them nearly. The caballeros of the district no less than the citizens of the town appeared to find in Don Q. a topic far from conducive to calmness. However, his repducive to calmness. However, his reputation stood with the poor; the rich, whom he sent empty away, bore him thief. He has been too long at large. much ill will. The room resounded with tales of the mysterious brigand. Each man could apply a different anecdote of his annoying, if not terrible, exploits, some of which dated back a score of years, some of yesterday, but almost all stamped with that distorted humor which commonly bit too deep

for laughter. The Count de Bermeja had told the story of Antonio's punishment by the brigand, and another of the hidalgos forward of every head. An excited quiver ran over the assembly. had spoken of a report that Don Q. hoped eventually to publish a book, which should take the form of an autobiography, and be enriched by a couple of appendices, the first setting forth the names of all his captives who had been ransomed, the dates of capture, amount of ransom, demanded and reappendix to be set within a suitable border of black, should contain a com-

Then Don Hugo, rising in his place, referred to the crowning offense but she moved with the air of acknowledged beauty, audacious and graceful.

ed hill thief. He was a strong man, which the brigand had been guilty. He mentally and physically, yet when told, in fact, with certain expedient evening began to fall, and the wind moaned over sad Spain, his impressionable nature took on a more somber tains. That so beautiful a woman tint. He would start at a footfall, and should have been kidnaped and half The words uttered in purest Spanish his hand whisk up to his ears. He frightened to death stirred the ready with the soft tone of courtecy almost startled the hearer. She peered across the smoke and flames, but the torch had been set to baffle her vision.

In winsk up to his ears. He frightened to death stirred the ready spanish chivalry, and when Don Huge declared himself ready to administe an oath of membership to a society of the set to baffle her vision. "I have come, senor, to implore your the fierce chief, each one of which ried into effect when a servant dis-

A captain of the civil guard was in waiting below, charged to speak with

minutes," returned Don Hugo impa

"Pardon, excellency, he bade me pre-sent this." The man held out a car a pause, which the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I permitted to ask by what name I may ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, "am I ways kept; that he never failed to the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciated as a tribute to her charms, and the lady fully appreciat The governor glanced at it and ut-

A slender man in the uniform of the civil guard was already bowing in the hind his shoulders, and, as he ra'sed his head, covered with dark curling hair, the assembly saw that he bore stains, not only of travel, but of mis adventure by the way. His brow was bandaged, and a spatter of blood showed on his cheek.

"My business is pressing, excellency Can I see you alone?" he said, in a low tone, which, however, carried an im-

'You have a mission connected with—" began the governor pleasantly "Pardon me," interrupted the courtly captain, "a secret mission, intrusted to me by the highest authority in Madrid."
"As to that you will never guess the urpose for which we are gathered here

"A matter of some responsibility and difficulty?" Del Pino's tone and gra-cious movement of the head were in the nature of a general compliment to the ability and position of those present. "You may speak freely. We-my friends and I-are agreed on that sub-Hugo waved his hand "Your mission then con-

largely. 'A certain gentleman, well known not only in these parts, but throughout the whole of Spain, a certain Don Q.," add-

d the captain quietly. "Come, come, Senor Capitan! We have less respect for the one-eared brigand of the Boca de Lobo," laughed the governor, too busy in lighting a cigarette to notice a sudden contraction of del Pino's features. of the rocks has troubled us too long We were, precisely when you arrived, arranging to make an end of him.

"No doubt your plan would be su cessful, though it was said, in Madrid, that he had defied capture for some fore her breast, then flung them apart scrub, a horse saddled and bridled in twenty years already, and that a score with a vehement gesture of rage. "O, scmi-military fashion. During four or so expeditions sent out against him

> "Can you bring yourself to conceive the last crime the fellow has commit-ted, senor?" Don Hugo took advantage of a pause. "He had the arrogance to kidnap my own wife in the last fortnight!"

Del Pino made a gesture of horrified "She must at once be ressurprise. "She mu cued!" he declared. "Make your mind easy, I pray. She is at this moment within these walls.

"I trust he treated her as a gentle-man should?" Captain del Pino asked in his soft drawl "On the contrary, he behaved like a

"He held her at ransom of course? 'No, no; not precisely," stuttered Don "He released her-after a few hours.

"That was surely considerate."
"Far from it! The reason of his acion is obvious. I wonder it does not Del Pino gazed for an instant at the governor's air of self-complacent rufA profound silence of a few seconds

braced him effusively on both cheeks.
"Accept our congratulations, senor. Gentlemen, let us drink to the health went up.

of this paladin, Captain del Pino!"

matter of luck. He explained that.
wishing to see the region of Don Q.'s a voice, in which anger was beginning exploits, he had left the train when ap- to conquer the first shock. proaching the mountains and ridden the remainder of the way. Thus he

"And now I would request his excellency to come with me to the cell in which the body has been placed, for the purpose of identifying it," he wound believe the would be whom I have at length punished. I undertook the function properly appertaining to the helpless executive. Late yesterday I belief El Duores."

"By all means. Let us go without de-y." Don Hugo could hardly yet credit o caressed his "Horrible!" he his good fortune in thus being rid of his hunting foe. He longed to behold murmured. "To be without one ear with his own eyes the dead face. "I have never yet seen Don Q., but they to lose both, and by the hand of an en-emy, would be a mortification scarcely to be survived." tell me the vulture is unmistakable,'

'Absolutely unmistakable," continued "Fortunately, none of us need fear anything of the kind," interrupted Don Hugo brusquely. "We have decided to "You say" Don Hugo led the way from the room.
"You say the body is in a cell, senor?
Why put a dead body in a cell?" he asked laughingly, as they went down

the corridor. The captain of the civil guard smiled necessary," ob- slightly. served del Pino, with an accentuation

"From all that is said of Don Q., excellency, I thought it well to turn the "What, do you propose to replace me, kev even on his corps The governor stopped as they passed "Replace you? Now excellency, that yould be impossible! But, by good luck, stairway leading upward. "My wife is on the roof-I will tell

> Del Pino restrained him. him first."

said Don Hugo, but half mollified.

"It is that I had the honor to kill more remote and secured dungeons reserved for the worst criminals

llowed this announcement.
"You killed Don Q. yesterday?" the del Pino's voice was heard to say as carried but one ear. Sit still

unresponsive del Pino, and em-dled folds of the cloak bore the uncouth count those outlines of a vulture's plumage.
"Don Q.!" a shout of astonishment

Which was forthwith done with many I pray you"—a small, commanding bravas" and a hubbub of excited hand rose from the cloak. "Be silent

"Safe, senores, in a cell of his own prison, and with him is the body of a came by chance upon the brigand and shot him down.

Thus he prison, and with thin is the Duques, will footpad, nicknamed El Duques, whose methods have brought discredit.

> killed El Duques. "But del Pino-have you killed him

"He is no more, senores, I regret to inform you." Don Q. laughed sibilantly. "But do not deplore his loss, for, with the exception of his well-curled wis and his hat of the civil guard, he

survives in me."
"You passed yourself off as Captain del Pino of the civil guard? But how could you impose upon any one with the body? The corpse was the corpse, you tell us, of El Duques."

"I will explain, senores. A razor passed over the skull, a little coloring on the eyelids the refinement bestowed by the forging hand of death converted it into a poor caricature of-myself." Don Q. raised his sombero. and from the doublings of the cloak shot up the lean, scraggy neck, the bald-browed, malignant face, the aspect of a vulture paraphrased into human likeless.

'One word more, senores. This Don "Pardon, excellency, make sure of the first."

They descended to the level of the ordinary cells, then lower to those remote and secured dungeons remote and secured dungeons remote and secured dungeons remote. The plies of any description to the books, duplicating machines and secured dungeons remote that he has made before the ment, that he has made before the ment.

"No, no, excellency, allow me to show than the meanest ass in Spain-1 give "You killed Don Q. yesterday?" the governor almost shouted.

"Yes, excellency, and I shall be glad to have a receipt for the body," went on del Pino immovably, "according to the regulations of my corps."

The tension of the last couple of weeks was lifted from the spirit of Don Hugo. In the enthusiasm of his relief he flung his arms round the stonily unresponsive del Pino, and em-

prison of Castelleno-presently The door was softly and suddenly shut and the lock clicked. Immediate "At your service, senors. Be silent, ly an indescribable uproar broke out. pray you"—a small, commanding The Condessa, from her chair on the Del Pino's glass was filled; no one observed that he left it untouched. But he professed himself overwhelmed by their approbation; his success, he begged them to believe, was a mere matter of luck. He explained that he explained that he cloak. "Be silent and remain seated. Remember, you have to deal with a man who is equally ready to die tonight or ten years hence. Also, if I may remind you, of a man who has never been known to neglect a precaution." house top, heard it and sprang to he a precaution."

"Where is the governor?" demanded tell you that I have kept my word." "What have you done?" she said,

"I have had a little interview with The lady shricked. "His ears?

"Will decorate my modest muse up in the mountains. But he will be ter husband.

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